UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/47/702
20 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-seventh session
Agenda item 97 (b)

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/118 of 17 December 1991 on the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, emphasized that when the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was reviewed, adequate staffing, temporary assistance and other resources should be allocated to the Centre so as to enable it to respond to its increasing workload and to its needs in order to carry out all the functions assigned to it, including the preparations for the World Conference on Human Rights to be held in 1993 and the Conference itself.

2. In addition, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that sufficient resources were accorded to the Centre to enable it to carry out, in full and on time, all the mandates, including the additional ones, resulting from the decisions of intergovernmental and expert bodies, and to submit an interim report to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-eighth session (E/CN.4/1992/75) and a final report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the developments relating to the activities of the Centre for Human Rights and on the measures taken to implement that resolution. The present report is issued in pursuance of that request.

3. On the basis of the Secretary-General's proposals, the General Assembly approved an increase in the regular budget of the Centre for 1992-1993. In addition, it approved certain redeployments and additional posts. A post of Director of the Centre for Human Rights has been established at D-2 level with responsibility for guiding the day-to-day activities of the Centre and

overseeing the implementation of its programme of work as a whole. A Director was appointed to this post and took up his functions on 12 August 1992.

4. To strengthen the handling of communications (complaints, petitions, appeals) under the procedures established in Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the General Assembly decided to approve two posts at the Professional level (one P-4 and one P-3) and two temporary General Service posts.

5. Likewise, to address the increased workload of the Special Procedures Section relating to various recurrent activities under mandates of the Economic and Social Council, a total of four temporary Professional posts (two P-4 and two P-3) and four temporary General Service posts have been approved through the conversion of the Centre's general temporary assistance funds, with a corresponding decrease in the latter. It is the intention of the General Assembly to examine proposals for the establishment of all these posts on a permanent basis no later than at the time of consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995

6. In respect of treaty bodies, the General Assembly, in its resolution 46/111 of 17 December 1991, requested the Secretary-General to review the need for adequate staffing resources in regard to the various treaty bodies and to report thereon to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-eighth session and to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

7. In his report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session (A/46/603), the Secretary-General elaborated on the substantial increase in the workload of the Centre in this area of activities, which has resulted from the doubling of the number of treaty-monitoring bodies being serviced by the Centre and a cumulative increase in the number of States parties to the various international human rights instruments (from 385 to 602). The total number of States parties has since risen to 652.

8. The establishment of two Professional (one P-4 and one P-3) and two General Service posts has been approved as from 1993 in the light of the expectation that the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families will enter into force during the biennium. Although two additional Professional posts and one General Service post were approved as from 1991 in connection with the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, further strengthening of the Centre with respect to support for the activities of the treaty-monitoring bodies is required, in view of the rapidly increasing number of States parties to the Convention and the anticipated workload of the Committee established thereunder.

9. In the course of 1992, however, as a result of additional mandates given to the Centre for Human Rights by the Commission on Human Rights and the increased utilization of existing mandates by the various rapporteurs or experts, 11 additional posts were authorized by the Secretary-General as from

15 October 1992, for an initial period of six months. Additional resources were also estimated as being essential to carry out all mandated activities for 1992 and 1993. These resources will be requested in the context of revised estimates to be presented to the General Assembly during its current session.

10. Furthermore, in connection with the appointment by the Commission on Human Rights at its first special session, held on 13 and 14 August 1992, of a Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, five Professional posts were redeployed to the Centre at the end of September 1992 for an initial period of six months. Additional resources were also estimated as being required in connection with this mandate. These resources will, as for those mentioned in paragraph 9 above, be sought in the context of the same revised estimates.

11. These additional human and financial resources were granted in order to ensure, as requested by the General Assembly in paragraph 2 of its resolution 46/118, that sufficient resources are accorded to the Centre for Human Rights to enable it to carry out, in full and on time, all the mandates, including the additional ones, resulting from the decisions of intergovernmental and expert bodies. Moreover, it should be recalled that in response to concerns about the reduction in general temporary assistance funds as a result of the conversion of posts, the General Assembly in its resolution 46/185 C of 20 December 1991 also requested the Secretary-General, with regard to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the level of general temporary assistance for section 28 (Human rights) of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, to ensure that adequate resources were available during that biennium.

12. The General Assembly also approved an appropriation of US$ 1,837,000 for the biennium 1992-1993 in connection with the preparations for the World Conference on Human Rights to be held in 1993, of which $1,445,000 was provided under section 28 (Human rights) of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993